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# *A CAMPAIGN STORY.*

—THE—

## **“Superb Soldier’s” Horse**

**WHICH MY UNCLE DID NOT BUY.**

**WITH REASONS WHY.**

**BY ONE OF HIS NEPHEWS.**

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## “Superb Soldier’s” Horse

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Children very early show their fondness for stories, and truth presented in this form is a very successful way of instructing them. “Children of a larger growth,” clear through the voting age, are scarcely less delighted and instructed by truth presented in this way. Therefore, I have thrown this lecture into the form of a narrative, or a story of The Horse my Uncle did not buy. However transparently truthful horse-jockeys are known to be, and noted for full, clear, unequivocal candor in statements and answers, yet it is well for any one in swapping or buying a horse to exercise a little judgment in examining the animal in temper, age, training, limb, wind, gait, habits, etc. My narrative may illustrate this profound and valuable truth. One morning, last June, a gentleman on a large, black, high-stepping steed, came riding up to my Uncle Samuel’s gate, accompanied by two other gentlemen on animals not so much distinguished for their blood

as for their ears. The rider of the black steed was a "superb soldier." I soon learned the other two were Mr. Cipher, distinguished for grand moneyed and railroad transactions, and Mr. Barnum, the illustrious purchaser of the animals Anah found in the wilderness while feeding the asses of Zibeon, his father, now known as mules.

The soldier wished to sell his Southern-blooded steed to my Uncle; but he could not do the trading himself, as he never condescended to do anything like Yankee chaffering, dickering, and bargaining—didn't know anything about business; he was a soldier, from his youth up; only a soldier; nothing else but a soldier; "a superb soldier;" therefore, Mr. Cipher and Barnum had come along to attend to the bargaining—to do the trading. My Uncle, Yankee-like, was never loth to talk about a trade, requested the "superb soldier" to dismount, that he might examine the animal, and remove his superb saddle and superb saddle-cloth, which almost hid the animal from view. But to this very unreasonable request of my Uncle, both Mr. Cipher and Barnum objected, saying the horse always appeared at his best when mounted by "a superb soldier," with a superb saddle and saddle-cloth; that his movements and bearing were always grander under such a rider. But my Uncle stubbornly insisted, that if he was to purchase, he must see the clean horse, without any trappings. The noble steed being uncovered, my Uncle asked Mr. Cipher if he could give his pedigree? "Yes, sir, indeed; he descended from Bucephalous and the Maid of Orleans, and from Shark, which Youatt, in his history of the horse, says, was sire of the best Kentucky and F. F. Virginian horses. He was brought out by the immortal Thomas Jefferson, stabled in Kentucky in 1798 and in Vir-

ginia in 1799, and afterwards was brought out by that "Old Hickory" hero, Gen. Jackson, and has been "pawing in the valley," unterrified, ever since. My Uncle remarked, that he feared he had not fared sumptuously for some time, as he seemed to show his ribs too plainly?

Mr. Cipher admitted he was thin in flesh, but said there was a great deal of wisdom in the saying, "a lean dog for a long race;" so a horse, for a long and hard run, must not carry too much flesh. He admitted the poor animal had not had much public oats for some twenty years; still he had fared better than Tanner; he had lived on nothing but water for forty days, but this steed, besides water, of which he was not very fond, had scarcely ever been without his whiskey—sometimes the best Kentucky Bourbon—and this was found to keep him in splendid spirits for the fray. My Uncle, stepping back a little, ran his eye along the spine from the withers to the loins, and said there seemed to be a very deep valley between the rump and the shoulders. He feared the animal was somewhat "chinked in the chine," as it is called, or what is vulgarly known as sway-backed.

Mr. Barnum admitted there was considerable concave there, and said this was usually caused by a fall, or the pressure of an enormously heavy burden. Yet he could prove it was an advantage to the strength of this animal in bearing up the greatest weights. It is a well established fact that there is no stronger architectural form of support than the arch or arc, and turning the animal over would give a beautiful segment of a circle. And if you only knew what loads, mountain loads, that horse has carried, you would never doubt his endurance, strength, and willingness to bear any load that may be laid upon him. Why, sir, we laid upon him at one

time nearly four millions of negro slaves, and all the cries and curses, and the bloody draconian code of the whole system, and he carried the whole enormous thing with ease, and walked with a high and royal step through the years from '50 to '60, and then we put on top of that a grand rebellion against majority, mudsill meddling, and national interference.

It was a huge load, indeed, but the noble beast would have carried it all, unhurt, but while thus burdened, an unfeeling butcher, by the name of Uly Simpson G., prodded him in the flank with a bayonet, and gave him a fall which perhaps caused, or at least deepened that curve of the spine; but I think he is almost, if not entirely, recovered. Phlebotomy is a remedy for that, and African and carpet-bag blood-letting has much reduced the inflammation, and a renowned Southern liniment has entirely cured him, and he is willing, and almost ready to repeat the grand feat over again. My Uncle, stepping in front of the grand old monarch, looked carefully at his eyes, and said he did not like the appearance of the cornea. Has his eye-sight not been injured at some-time? Has he never had the "gutta-serena," known by the name of the glass-eye? Has he never had the staggers? Ah, yes, says Mr. Barnum, at one time he was slightly afflicted with some of these things! The first is usually caused by the air of the stable becoming very much heated, at the same time becoming impregnated with some subtle poison, also very strong fumes of ammonia or hartshorn rising in the stable is injurious to the eyes; also the darkness of the stable, very little or dim light, injures the sight. This steed has always been kept in his Southern stable, and for a spell, perhaps, between '60 and '65, the air down there



became very much heated, and carried some subtle poison in it, also the fumes of ammonia were unusually pungent; then the stable never had light enough in it—they never liked school-houses and school-masters or 'mams down there, they shot the one and burned the other. And while the noble steed was suffering semi-blindness, a brute by the name of Abe Lincoln hit him over the head with a big, cruel emancipation club, and gave him the staggers! But we think he is almost entirely recovered. Some half-million enlighteners went down there, and blew his stable full of holes, let in lots of light, cooled the air, and removed some of the poisonous malaria, and you can see for yourself the cornea is almost perfectly clear.

My Uncle thought he saw some suspicious protuberances on the hind limbs, just above the pastern joint; and stepping up gently laid his hand upon the horse's rump, and began to rub down his hind leg, when the horse, with both feet, gave a most malicious kick, just grazing my Uncle's head! My Uncle lifted his face with a slight pallor but a blazing eye.

Mr. Barnum in a tone of apology said, that for some reason the animal would never permit a real Northern man to rub his hind pastern joints. A very gentle and amiable sucker by the name of Abraham, tried it once and was kicked to death. Even the most superb Northern soldier had to be very careful which end of the animal he handled. A genuine native born Southern gentleman can stand right behind him, and curry both hind legs with perfect safety, the animal really seems to enjoy it. But several Northern gentlemen who have tried it will perhaps, never forget the result. It is said, Seymour and Pendleton, and Trumbull, and Doolittle, and Julian, and

Butler, and Thurman, and Tilden, yet bear the proofs, behind and before, of their attempt.

There is nothing the matter with his hind pastern joints, and they ought to let them alone. This fiery charger was so provoked at one time with this meddling that he kicked eleven stable doors all to flinders, and the hinges off three others, let all the animals out to rage around unbridled and unrestrained; and it cost several thousand millions to repair the smash and recover the beasts, and quite a number of people were killed. Northern people ought to let his hind feet alone. One end of the horse is quite enough for them.

My Uncle took the hint and went to the front end and proposed to open his mouth and examine his teeth, but the animal laid back his ears and opened his mouth himself, in a way that startled my Uncle again. This time Mr. Cipher apologized the explanation. He said two or three unmanly fellows by the names of Garrison, and Sumner, and Brown, had gotten hold of the steed's bridle at one time, several years ago, and jerked him and teased him and examined his teeth, and falsified his age and ancestry, tracing his origin away back into the age of barbarism. They had fearfully insulted the creature, and ruffled and spoiled his temper, but if my Uncle would kindly pat his neck, and very gently open his mouth he thought he might look at his teeth without being hurt. My Uncle thought it was hardly worth while, as when the animal's mouth was opened, he saw there were no teeth worth looking after — they were now simply store-teeth.

My Uncle, at a safe distance, examined the fore pastern joints, and said he thought he saw evidence of the disease called "Grease," or of "Acute Founder," and asked if the

horse had not at sometime been foundered? Mr. Barnum said, to tell the truth, it is supposed he was at one time. About 1856 he broke into a wealthy gentleman's fields and granary and ate too much. Youatt says nine or ten pounds of oats is enough for an ordinary horse, but he ate several million bushels, besides fodder he never took any account of whatever. In fact it began to be feared there would be nothing either green or dry left, but as he could not hold any more he had to stop. But we think he has entirely recovered from that founder, as he has been compelled to fast ever since, except what whiskey he could get, and what water he could be induced to take. He has since that broken into a few fields here and there, but most of them have been old rebel battle-fields that proved rather naked, so he has never foundered since, and we think he is entirely well by this time. My Uncle thought he saw about the hock-joint some signs of an old bone spavin and asked Mr. Cipher if the animal at sometime had not been galloped very hard or very far, or been driven very severely.

Mr. Cipher said it was possible he had, because between the period of '50 and '60 they had given him to Southern gentlemen to hunt and carry back runaway slaves, whether negroes or not, and as some of these had very nearly reached the land of refuge, the Canada border, he had a very long and hard run, and perhaps had been driven day and night too hard. My Uncle remarked that he noticed about the fetlock evidence of more recent windgalls, and supposed he had been over-ridden more recently than that.

Mr. Cipher said they had loaned him to the great General Unready in 1864 to hunt up loyal soldiers who would vote that the war was a failure on their side, but these were so

few and so far between the great General in his anxiety and vexation, dug his spurs into the sides of the animal, rode far and fast and furious, and when he returned the horse it was found that he was somewhat wind-broken, had several saddle sores on him, had a number of wind-galls, and a touch of the pole-evil, supposed to have been caused by a rap over the head with the poles. My Uncle said he noticed the hair was rubbed off the horse's sides and hips in several places, that there were scars on his shoulders, and remaining signs of fistula about the withers.

Yes, sir, says Mr. Barnum, the scar you notice high up on the rump there, is where Davis tattooed his title, "secession horse," into his flesh, and in 1872 they hired an ignorant lubber of a servant, named Horace, who did not know a horse-thief from a Democrat, who said he had a process by which the name could be entirely removed, but he did not succeed, as the letters of the name reappear at times, as you see they are now beginning to show pretty plainly again. And he tried to work the horse in harness entirely too large for him. He tried to gear him in rigging large enough for the whole United States, but the horse had never been accustomed to harness half that size, and of course it chafed and galled him, and he didn't work well. Then the presumptuous, awkward lummoX thought he would mount him, without his master's orders, and go a horseback, so the horse threw him and killed him. Northern servants ought to have learned a lesson from this, that the aristocratic proud steed will not carry any Northern rider, not even the most "superb soldier," only by his Southern master's orders. My Uncle asked if this horse was noted for intelligence?

Yes, sir, said Mr. Cipher, Dan Rice never had anything in his

ring that could equal him ; for instance, in counting, that horse can beat anything ever known at a count, of course he does it principally by signs, and says nothing about it. In Alabama he was given a ballot-box with only 100 votes of a certain kind in it, and he counted nearly 400 of that very kind out of it. In Georgia he counted a minority of 15,000 over into a majority of 50,000, and counted equally well in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Florida, and in South Carolina counted population faster than houses could be built for them. He never was crazy enough to say "once one is two," but once one is a hundred, ciphers are nothing, put in as many of them as you please. He has some other tricks which show just as much intelligence as that one.

My Uncle said to Mr. Cipher, it seems to me so noble a steed should have better care taken of him than he has had for sometime.

True, sir, says Mr. Cipher, true ; and so soon as his Southern master recovers his rightful inheritance, the vast domain which he lost by no fault or crime of his own, but only because of the overwhelming numbers and ferocity, and unscrupulous and unchivalric mode of warfare of his enemies—I say so soon as he recovers his lost estate, we will build him a royal stable, repair all the stalls that have been broken down, return all his faithful, loving, and happy grooms that have been driven from him and scattered from Canada to Kansas. He shall feed on the fat of the land, and never know want or work any more. Yes, sir ; and he deserves it all.

My Uncle asked if he was a good draught-horse ; if he would pull well ?

Pull well ! Nothing ever hitched in harness could beat him pulling back or pulling down hill. If it had not been for

some mulish things pulling against him he would have pulled this whole national concern into the valley of Jehoshaphat long ago.

My Uncle said to Mr. Barnum, it is reported this steed was hitched to the car of freedom sometime ago; he balked and refused to pull a pound; how was that?

Yes, says Mr. Barnum; it was this way: His Southern owner had written on the front end of the car, "Negro equality and supremacy;" when the noble beast turned his head and saw that, his proud Caucasian soul was disgusted, therefore, he refused to pull, and what wonder! Think of it! Bah! He was perhaps deceived, sir; only misled. Just assure him that the effort is to lift the noble race into the pure mountain air of freedom, and every muscle will be stretched to its utmost tension. Turn loose that white milk-sop of a colt you have the harness on; purchase and hitch up this giant steed, if you wish to advance rapidly toward the purer, serener heights of constitutional liberty.

What do you ask, says my Uncle, for your steed, Mr. Barnum?

Well, sir; we will make the terms very easy and reasonable. We do not ask the cash down. We will sell on time and conditions. First, this "superb soldier" is to be the only rider for at least four years. Second, he and all future riders of the animal are to have a spacious, well-furnished house, rent free, on the Potomac, with plenty of paid servants. Third, the horse is to be well stabled on the south side, in a mild climate, and furnished by you with all the oats he may demand, and is to be pastured in the North during the summer. Fourth, he is to be worked only under the direction of his Southern master, and we expect you to pay for all the

oats he lost by the twenty years fast he was compelled to endure. We could not sell him outright for cash down. He is invaluable. We could agree on no definite price that would equal his worth. But so long as you comply with these easy, trifling terms, the priceless horse is at your service, but no longer.

I fancy my Uncle looked very much as a generous, patriotic gentleman would, if Shylock or William English should stick a pin in him to get a little blood to write a mortgage or a deed to that gentleman's real estate; and you may imagine that look. But the cool, genial old gentleman said, with great suavity: Mr. Barnum, I have a heavy and very precious cargo to carry toward the mountain top, and as your animal is getting up in years, and has been afflicted with several diseases at various times, I fear he is not strong enough for my work.

Not strong enough! cried Mr. Cipher; not strong enough! you are ignorant of his strength sir, the weight of the load he has carried for the last five years can never be told. He has carried whole regiments of "rifle clubs," and "whiteliners," and "shot gun companies," and numbers of ballot-boxes and untold reams of tissue ballots, and besides all these perhaps more than two thousand dead negroes and carpet baggers. The scales have never been invented that could weigh the load he carries, yet he is able to bear much more; you may lay between his withers and rump, in the deep concave of his strong back, the whole Confederate debt, two thousand millions of Southern claims, and a thousand millions of greenbacks besides, and he will carry them all without a grunt, and a "superb soldier" sitting above all.

I saw that in my Uncle's eye which said, that slow-match

has burned up to the powder. As it kindled, he said, Mr. Cipher, your steed will not suit me, you acknowledge he is older than General Jackson, that he has been wind-broken, has had the staggers, bone-spavin, gutta-serena, acute-founder, windgalls, fistula, and pole-evil, is thin in flesh, is ravenously hungry and sway-backed; that he can work only under the direction of another master, yet you expect me to pasture him in my meadows, provide all the oats his bottomless stomach may demand, and pay for all the oats he has lost by twenty years unwilling fasting! you call these easy, trifling terms! you acknowledge he now carries a foul, guilty, loathesome load, heavy enough to crush an elephant and Leviathan rolled together, yet you think he can carry much more. Let me tell you sir, if he is willing to carry his present burden he is not fit to bear the cargo that now lies on my noble white steed. And I know your horse would not work in the harness my horse is now working in, nor pull at the front end of the car that mine is now drawing; because for more than twenty years your old horse has been pulling at the other end of the car of progress, pulling the other way and pulling downward. And young as my gallant charger is I can prove he is much stronger than yours, for he has pulled **yours** upward with all his horrid unweighable load clinging to him, has drawn him across the field of emancipation, through the valley of resumption, across the plains of reconstruction, into the clear pathway of a sound national currency and rejoicing prosperity, and so far up the mountain side of a higher, purer, stronger, national life. And if the old skeleton will continue hitched on behind the car which this gigantic young steed is drawing from the valley to the heights above, we will draw him clear into the pure serene atmos-



phere of the mountain summit, where the whole earth can look upon a nation which gives to its citizens sufficient defence and protection, a full, fair ballot, an honest count and freedom of tongue and pen, and unfurls the banner of equal rights and liberty over all its people. And in such a presence as that, "a cloud of witnesses," made up of God, angels, and earth, your old purblind, spavined nag may likely drop his wretched, loathesome load, and in that high, pure air he may recover his sight and health, and renew his youth. But this his "Maine" chance is becoming more hopeless every day, having besides his other diseases, lung fever and consumption, but few have any hope he will ever recover or live much longer. At present he is utterly unfit for my purposes, as for his intrinsic value I would not give you a Confederate shin-plaster for him. It may be true that money enough makes the mare go, but no one has ever yet been able to estimate how much it takes to keep that horse going. So good day, gentlemen. For these reasons my Uncle did not buy the "superb soldier's horse," so he is still in the hands of the auctioneers





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